

# January 2022

- [Eye Protection](#)
- [Getting Ready for Winter Work](#)

# Eye Protection

## Eye Protection

Let's take a short elementary test. Can you tell me how many basic senses there are, and can you name them? Taste, smell, hearing, touch, and sight. Of the five, which is the one that we depend upon the most? You guessed it -- it's sight. Everything we do involves the use of our eyes and God only gave us two. How many times have you said or heard -- "He should have worn his safety glasses." -- or -- "If I had been wearing my safety glasses, I wouldn't have injured my eye." -- Too many times!

- Eye protection begins with the ability to recognize those times that eye protection is needed, and then, to seriously commit to wear the protection whenever necessary. Anytime you're working where there is the potential for flying particles eye protection is required. When using a saw, drill, pouring concrete, chipping, blasting, or handling chemicals just to name a few. Dirt, dust, rust, rock, bits of concrete, etc. are all potential dangers in construction work.
- Should a member of your crew get something in their eye seek proper medical attention right away. The longer it stays in the worse it gets. Only a professional should attempt to remove a foreign body from the eye. Cover the eye lightly with a clean pad and either wait for medical help to arrive or take the employee to a doctor.
- Don't forget that eye protection is also needed when using chemicals. Make sure you're using chemical goggles and a splash shield. You may need to flush the eyes should they encounter the chemical. Emergency first aid procedures are discussed in the Material Safety a Sheet for the chemical. Let's wrap up what we've

learned. Eyesight is precious -- and -- irreplaceable. Don't take chances with your vision -- wear eye protection!

**WEAR SAFETY GOGGLES AT HOME TOO, WHEN USING POWER TOOLS, PAINTING, CHOPPING WOOD, ETC.**

# Getting Ready for Winter Work

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- Two big concerns of working or simply spending time outdoors in cold weather are frostbite and hypothermia. Both can occur at much higher temperatures than many people realize. For example, exposed skin can start to freeze at just 28 degrees Fahrenheit (-2 degrees Celsius) and deep frostbite can cause blood clots and even gangrene. Hypothermia is a potentially fatal condition caused by loss of body temperature, even in winter conditions people might not consider particularly nasty. Symptoms include fatigue, nausea, confusion, lightheadedness, and profuse sweating. Without medical treatment the victim can lose consciousness and die. Between 1979 and 1995, an average of 723 Americans died each year as the result of hypothermia.
- Wear the right gloves for the work you are doing. Gloves should have enough insulation to keep you warm and prevent frostbite but be thin enough so you can feel what you are doing if you are manipulating controls or tools. Gloves which are too thick can also make your hands and wrists work too hard trying to hold on to objects, causing repetitive strain injury.
- Dress in layers of light-weight clothing which keep you warmer than a single layer of heavy clothes. Remove layers as necessary to prevent overheating and perspiring which can lead to chills or hypothermia later. Remember that wet clothing is 20 times less warm than dry clothing. Wear a hat and you'll stay much warmer when working in cold conditions. As much as half your body heat can go up in steam off the top of a bare head. Protect your ears from frostbite as well by wearing a hat that will cover your ears or use earmuffs.
- While donning a scarf or muffler might help keep your neck warm in the cold weather, it could also kill you if you work near rotating machinery. Check your winter wardrobe for entanglement hazards such as loose sleeves and dangling drawstrings.
- Keep your safety eyewear from fogging up in the cold. Investigate anti-fog coatings and wipes to see if these products are appropriate for your eyewear. If you must keep taking off your safety eyewear because it fogs up, it isn't protecting you.

- Look at the soles of your winter footwear. Your shoes or boots should have adequate tread to prevent slips and falls on wet or icy surfaces. For extremely slippery situations, you can attach clogs or cleats to your footwear. Slow down when walking across slippery surfaces and be especially careful on ladders, platforms, and stairways.

- Get plenty of rest. Working in the cold and even traveling to and from work in the winter takes lots of energy. Cold weather can strain your heart, even if you aren't overexerting yourself, so be sure to pace yourself when lifting heavy objects or shoveling snow.